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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,540	07/02/2003	Randy D. Baxter	RSW920030049US2	3593

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EXAMINER

KARDOS, NEIL R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3623

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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04/14/2008

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

mld@mindspring.com

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/612,540	Applicant(s) BAXTER ET AL.	
	Examiner Neil R. Kardos	Art Unit 3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 February 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 24 and 25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 24 and 25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 February 2008 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/18/08, 1/26/08, 2/14/08</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is a final Office action on the merits.

Claims 1, 11-16, 20-21, and 24 have been amended.

Claims 22-23 have been cancelled.

Currently, claims 1-21 and 24-25 are pending and have been examined.

Remarks

2. Replacement Drawings

Examiner acknowledges the corrections made in the replacement drawings (figure 3) filed on February 8, 2008.

3. Oath/Declaration

The objection to the oath/declaration stated in the previous office action is withdrawn.

The oaths/declarations filed on July 2, 2003, when taken in combination, contain all of the inventors' signatures.

4. Claim Objections

The amendments to claims 15, 20, and 21 are sufficient to overcome the objection for typographical errors set forth in the previous office action.

5. 35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections

The amendment to claim 12 is sufficient to overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejections set forth in the previous office action.

6. Double Patenting Rejections

Some of the double patenting rejections have been overcome via amendment or cancellation of claims. The remaining issues are discussed in the double patenting rejections below.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed on February 8, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the submitted amendments to claims 1, 14, and 24 are not rendered obvious by the cited references or combinations thereof. Examiner respectfully disagrees.

Applicant argues that the cited references do not teach “a specification of how much the assessment score would be increased if the assigned attribute value was raised to the threshold.”

Miller teaches a system that makes recommendations for improving products to bring them in line with customer expectations (see paragraphs 48, 51, and 60-61). Ruffin teaches associating a score with various recommended solution implementations (see column 18: lines 51-53). The combination of these teachings would result in an indication of a score that would be achieved by implementing a recommendation that brings a product in line with customer expectations. This combination would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to

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combine these teachings for the benefit of efficiency gained in implementing the best possible recommendation (i.e. the recommendation that generates the highest score). Therefore, the limitations contained in the submitted amendments are rendered obvious by the combination of the references cited in the previous office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. **Claims 1-4, 7, 14-17, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. pre-grant publication number 2003/0216955 to Miller et al (“Miller”) in view of U.S. patent number 6,219,654 to Ruffin (“Ruffin”).**

Claims 1 and 14-17: Miller discloses a method comprising steps of:

- determining a plurality of criteria that are important to a target market, and at least one attribute to be used for measuring each of the criteria (see figures 2-5; paragraph 35, lines 1-12; paragraph 58; see paragraph 37, lines 10-14 for examples of attributes);
- specifying objective measurements for each of the attributes (see paragraph 46, lines 1-3); and
- conducting an evaluation of an IT product, further comprising steps of:

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- inspecting a representation of the IT product, with reference to selected ones of the attributes (see paragraph 35, lines 1-12; paragraph 44; paragraph 58);
- assigning attribute values to the selected attributes, according to how the IT product compares to the specified objective measurements (see paragraph 46, lines 3-5);
- generating a list of recommended actions, the list having an entry for each of the selected attributes for which the assigned attribute value falls below a threshold, each of the entries providing at least one suggestion for improving the assigned attribute value (see paragraph 37, lines 6-10, wherein direction is provided for product design improvements; see figure 4 and paragraphs 47-48, wherein a chart is used to recommend the attributes that should be improved when their values fall below customer expectations; see figure 6 and paragraph 51, lines 6-8, wherein actions that should be taken are identified).

Miller does not explicitly disclose:

- generating an assessment score, for the IT product, from the assigned attribute values;
- a specification of how much the assessment score would be increased if the assigned attribute value was raised to the threshold.

Ruffin teaches weighing and combining scores relating to customer objectives for IT products in order to create a total weighted score (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 18).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the teachings of Ruffin to combine the assigned attribute values of Miller in order to generate an assessment score. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to rank products (see Ruffin, column 16, lines 17-18).

Ruffin also teaches associating a score with various solution implementations (see column 18: lines 51-53).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to associate an implementation score as taught by Ruffin to each of the recommended actions disclosed by Miller. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of efficiency gained in implementing the best possible solutions.

Claim 2: Miller discloses wherein the list of recommended actions is generated automatically, responsive to the assigned attribute values that fall below the threshold (see paragraphs 30-31).

Claim 3: Miller discloses prioritizing each of the attributes in view of its importance to the target market (see figures 3-5; paragraph 45, lines 13-16).

Miller does not explicitly disclose assigning weights to the attributes according to the prioritizations and using the weights when generating the assessment score.

Ruffin teaches weighing and combining scores relating to customer objectives for IT products in order to create a total weighted score (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 18).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the teachings of Ruffin to combine the prioritized attribute values of Miller in

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order to weigh attributes and generate an assessment score. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to rank products (see Ruffin, column 16, lines 17-18).

Claim 4: Miller discloses wherein the assessment score is programmatically generated (see paragraphs 30-31).

Claim 7: Miller discloses wherein a product team developing the IT product provides input for the evaluation by answering questions on a questionnaire that reflects the attributes (see paragraph 36, lines 1-18, wherein information is received via a questionnaire from the client; see paragraph 32, where the client is defined as a party who manufactures products).

Claim 24: Miller discloses a method comprising steps of:

- conducting an evaluation of an IT product, further comprising the steps of:
- inspecting a representation of the IT product, with reference to selected ones of a plurality of attributes, wherein the attributes are defined to measure a plurality of criteria that are important to the target market (see paragraph 35, lines 1-12; paragraph 44; paragraph 58); and
- assigning attribute values to the selected attributes, according to how the IT product compares to objective measurements which have been specified for each of the attributes (see paragraph 46, lines 1-3);
- recording results of conducting the evaluation (see figures 3-5, where the results are recorded on a graph).

Miller does not explicitly disclose using the recorded results to generate an assessment score, for the IT product, from the assigned attribute values, wherein the generated assessment

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score thereby indicates how well the product meets the criteria that are important to the target market.

Ruffin teaches weighing and combining scores relating to customer objectives for IT products in order to create a total weighted score (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 18).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use teachings of Ruffin to combine the assigned attribute values of Miller in order to generate an assessment score. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to rank products (see Ruffin, column 16, lines 17-18).

Miller also does not explicitly disclose for each of the selected attributes for which the assigned attribute value falls below a predetermined threshold, a specification of how much the assessment score would be increased if the assigned attribute value was raised to the threshold.

Ruffin teaches associating a score with various solution implementations (see column 18: lines 51-53).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to associate an implementation score as taught by Ruffin to each of the recommended actions disclosed by Miller. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of efficiency gained in implementing the best possible solutions.

10. Claims 5-6 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller and Ruffin in view of U.S. pre-grant publication number 2004/0068456 to Korisch (“Korisch”).

Claim 5: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose wherein the step of conducting an evaluation is repeated at a plurality of plan checkpoints used in developing the product.

Korisch teaches repeatedly checking to determine if a product meets predetermined specifications in order for that product to proceed to the next step (see figure 4, item 29; paragraph 154, lines 19-25).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Korisch with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to meet product requirements (see Korisch, paragraph 154, lines 22-24).

Claims 6 and 20: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose wherein successful completion of each of the plan checkpoints requires the assessment score to exceed a predetermined threshold.

Korisch teaches repeatedly checking to determine if a product meets predetermined specifications in order for that product to proceed to the next step (see figure 4, item 29; paragraph 154, lines 19-25).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Korisch with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to meet product requirements (see Korisch, paragraph 154, lines 22-24).

11. Claims 8, 10, 13, 18-19, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller and Ruffin in view of U.S. patent number 7,103,561 to Sarkisian, et al (“Sarkisian”).

Claim 8: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose a method wherein the assigned attribute values, the assessment score, and the list of recommended actions are recorded in a workbook.

Sarkisian teaches recording scores and recommendations in a workbook (see figures 4A-4D).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Sarkisian with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to recall the information at a later time.

Claim 10: Miller discloses a method wherein a product team developing the product provides input for the evaluation by answering questions on a questionnaire that reflects the attributes (see paragraph 36, lines 1-18, wherein information is received via a questionnaire from the client; see paragraph 32, where the client is defined as a party who manufactures products).

Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose wherein the answers to the questions, the assigned attribute values, the assessment score, and the list of recommended actions are recorded in an electronic workbook

Sarkisian teaches recording scores and recommendations in a workbook (see figures 5A-5C, wherein general definitions to attributes are given; figures 4A-4D, which specifically provide how the product meets or fails to meet the definitions).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Sarkisian with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to recall the information at a later time.

Claims 13 and 21: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose a method comprising the step of assigning a special designation to the product if and only if the assessment score exceeds a predefined threshold.

Sarkisian teaches using competing products as benchmarks to determine different product designations (see column 6, lines 23-50).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Sarkisian with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to differentiate products with various scores (see Sarkisian, column 6, lines 23-50).

Claim 18: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose a method wherein the specified objective measurements further comprise textual descriptions to be used in the step of assigning attribute values.

Sarkisian teaches wherein the specified objective measurements further comprise textual descriptions to be used in the step of assigning attribute values (see figures 5A-5C; column 7, lines 48-63).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Sarkisian with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One

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of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to in order to provide guidance in scoring the attributes (see Sarkisian, column 7, lines 48-63).

Claim 19: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose a method wherein the textual descriptions identify guidelines for assigning the attribute values using a multi-point scale.

Sarkisian teaches wherein the textual descriptions identify guidelines for assigning the attribute values using a multi-point scale (see figures 5A-5C; column 7, lines 48-63).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Sarkisian with the inventions of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to in order to provide guidance in scoring the attributes (see Sarkisian, column 7, lines 48-63).

12. Claims 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller, Ruffin, and Sarkisian in view of Official Notice.

Claim 9: Sarkisian discloses recording scores and recommendations in a workbook (see figures 4A-4D).

Miller, Ruffin, and Sarkisian do not teach wherein the workbook is an electronic workbook.

Official Notice is taken that it was well known in the computer arts at the time the invention was made to store information in electronic workbooks (see Microsoft Excel).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use well-known computer data methods to store the workbooks of Sarkisian in an

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electronic format. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to store the information on a computer.

Claim 12: Miller, Ruffin, and Sarkisian do not explicitly disclose providing the assessment workbook, following the evaluation, to a product development team which is developing the IT product.

Official Notice is taken that it was well known in the product development arts at the time the invention was made to provide the individuals responsible for product development with information that would aid in product development.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine well known practices with the invention of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to apply the assessment scores and recommendations in practice.

13. Claims 11 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller and Ruffin in view of Official Notice.

Claim 11: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose providing the assigned attribute values, the assessment score, and the list of recommended actions, and the specification of how much the assessment score would be increased to a product team developing the IT product

Official Notice is taken that it was well known in the product development arts at the time the invention was made to provide the individuals responsible for product development with information that would aid in product development such as product scores and recommended courses of action.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine well known practices with the invention of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to apply the assessment scores and recommendations in practice.

Claim 25: Miller and Ruffin do not explicitly disclose charging a fee for carrying out one or more of the conducting, recording, and using steps.

Official Notice is taken that it was well known in the business arts at the time the invention was made to charge clients for services performed.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine well known business methods with the invention of Miller and Ruffin. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to make a profit.

Double Patenting

14. Claims 1-21 of this application conflict with claims 1-2 of application number 10/439570, claim 10 of application number 10/439573, claims 1-20 and 23 of application number 11/244510, claims 1-21 of application number 11/244608, claims 1-2 of application number 11/244644, and claims 1-2 of application number 11/244789. 37 CFR 1.78(b) provides that when two or more applications filed by the same applicant contain conflicting claims, elimination of such claims from all but one application may be required in the absence of good and sufficient reason for their retention during pendency in more than one application. Applicant is required to either cancel the conflicting claims from all but one application or maintain a clear line of demarcation between the applications. See MPEP § 822.

15. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

16. A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

17. Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

18. Claims 1 and 14-17 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-2 of copending Application No. 10/439570. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would be obvious (i.e. old and well-known) to use assessment scores to suggest and implement improvements that would increase the assessment score.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

19. Claim 14 is provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 10 of copending Application No. 10/439573. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would be obvious (i.e. old and well-known) to use assessment scores to suggest and implement improvements that would increase the assessment score.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

20. Claims 1-21 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 and 23 of copending Application No. 11/244510. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would be obvious (i.e. old and well-known) to use assessment scores to suggest and implement improvements that would increase the assessment score.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

21. Claims 1-21 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-21 of copending Application No. 11/244608. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would be obvious (i.e. old and well-known) to use assessment scores to suggest and implement improvements that would increase the assessment score.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

22. Claim 14 is provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-2 of copending Application No. 11/244644. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would be obvious (i.e. old and well-known) to use assessment scores to suggest and implement improvements that would increase the assessment score.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

23. Claim 1 is provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-2 of copending Application No. 11/244789. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other

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because it would be obvious (i.e. old and well-known) to use assessment scores to suggest and implement improvements that would increase the assessment score.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

24. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

24. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Neil R. Kardos whose telephone number is (571) 270-3443. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Neil R. Kardos
Examiner
Art Unit 3623

NRK
3/29/08

/Beth Van Doren/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3623